

Drostdy Hotel, Graaff-Reinet
Cultural Landscape Assessment

First Draft
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OvP Associates

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
architects | environmental planners



141 Hatfield Street Gardens Cape Town 8001 South Africa Tel +27 +21462 1262 Fax +27 +21461 6162

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1. Introduction

“The town stands upon a crescent-shaped flat, bordered by the Zoondag or Sunday’s River, in which there was now but little water,” the missionary Backhouse wrote in 1844. “The streets cross at right angles, and are bordered with lemon trees the intervening squares are filled up with vineyards and gardens, having hedges of lemon, pomegranate and quince, and being watered from a copious spring in the neighbourhood, by means of ditches. The gardens are stocked with orange, pear, apricot and peach trees. The houses which stand separately, are built in Dutch style and are white-washed they have oleanders and melias or other ornamental trees in front. The blossoms of the oleander and pomegranate were very beautiful, and the air was perfumed by the flowers of the vine.”

This extract taken out of the chapter ‘Midsummer in Graaff-Reinet’, from the book Karoo, written by Lawrence G. Green in 1955 sets a wonderful scene in describing the atmosphere and character of historical landscape in Graaff-Reinet.

This Cultural Landscape Assessment for the Drostdy Property gives large consideration of the town context and its history which comprise features and influences that have directly impacted on the cultural landscape of the Drostdy Property. Much of the recommendations for maintaining or enhancing the landscape of the Drostdy Property will be derived from assessing the site within its broader context.

2. Background

The SA College for Tourism, owner of the Drostdy Hotel property in Graaff-Reinet, intends to expand and upgrade this historically significant hotel complex.

The objectives of the redevelopment is to retain and enhance the heritage significance and revive the property and hotel business through restoration of historical structures, removal of inappropriate structures and landscape elements and improve the overall functioning and spatial layout of the property.

2.1. Project Brief

OvP Associates were commissioned to prepare a Cultural Landscape Framework Plan, to inform the proposed redevelopment of the Drostdy Hotel property in accordance with the requirements of South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

This Cultural Landscape Assessment will augment the proposed Master Plan, Urban Design Statement, and Heritage Statement to combine the various cultural resources.

2.2. Purpose of the Cultural Landscape Assessment

The Cultural Landscape Assessment will provide an overview of the site by revealing how the landscape has been altered and influenced since urban settlement.

The Assessment should enable those preparing the development plans to quickly identify areas, items, elements or uses that are sufficiently significant to be retained, enhanced or reintroduced, and those which are not appropriate can be removed, altered or downgraded. Any implementation should not reduce the cultural significance of the site within its context.

2.3. Study area

The Drostdy Hotel Property is located in the centre of the historic town of Graaff-Reinet in the Eastern Cape. The hotel property comprises Erf 3476 Drostdy, Erf 3477 Stretch's Court & Erf 1176 no. 5 Parlement Street.

This assessment also gives consideration of the precinct and town context, which include features or influences that may impact on the significance of the cultural landscape of the site.

2.4. Definition of a Cultural Landscape

'A cultural landscape is a physical area with natural features and elements modified by human activity through time, resulting in patterns of evidence layered in the landscape, which give a place its particular character, reflecting human relationships with and attachment to that landscape.' (*Jane Lennon & Associates, March 1996*)

Californian academic geographer Carl Sauer first termed the concept of a 'cultural landscape' in 1925: A "cultural landscape ... is fashioned out of a natural landscape by a culture group. The group is the active force, the natural area the medium in which the group works, the cultural landscape is the result." (*Jones, October 2007*)

A cultural landscape is thus a representation of various factors that evolve through time resulting in the creation of various forms and manifestation on a tract of land. Natural factors may include climate and vegetation related to topography and watercourses. Culture includes knowledge and ideas to create tangible human manifestations of human actions and beliefs. Thus, a cultural group is an agent of change and crafts cycles of cultural landscape development.

Australian cultural geographer Frawley provided a definition of the merits of conserving cultural landscapes: "...because they provide a cumulative record of human activity and land use, insights into the values, ideals, and philosophies of communities and their relationship with place. They also have socio-historical significance and aesthetic qualities."

Cultural landscapes thus possess both tangible and intangible qualities, expressing of our ideals over time whether incrementally or suddenly. (*Jones, October 2007*)

3. Methodology

Research for the cultural landscape of the site and greater Graaff-Reinet included;

- fieldwork research and a visual and photographic survey
- review of literature, historic period narratives, historical photos, maps and surveys
- obtaining input and recollections from local residents
- review of the draft Urban Design, and Heritage Statements, prepared by dhk Architects and Urban Concepts for the redevelopment project
- assessment of the architectural and landscape architectural proposals for the property

Review and analysis of the research has provided cultural landscape indicators and recommendations which can inform and be integrated within design proposals for the property.

3.1. Criteria for Assessment

Elements of significance will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- **Aesthetic value:** including aspects of sensory perception measured by qualities such as form, scale, colour, texture and material.
- **Historic value:** relating to how a place has influenced or been influenced by a historic figure, event, phase or activity.
- **Scientific value:** reflecting the importance of the data involved, its rarity, quality, or representativeness, and on the degree to which the place may contribute further substantial information.
- **Social value:** embracing the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment to a majority or minority group.

4. Contextual Information

The Graaff-Reinet landscape has been described as constituting a microcosm of South African history, encompassing features of early settlement, racial struggles, geological transformations of the Karoo, rich archaeological finds, and incredibly diverse flora and fauna. (*Conservation Landscape, 2009*)

The town also has the largest and best preserved collection of buildings from colonial times found in South Africa. Approximately 200 buildings in the 'horseshoe' neighbourhood have been declared provincial heritage sites. 'With all its historical associations, monuments and restored buildings, Graaff-Reinet can rightly be described as a living museum.' (*Sahistory.org*)

The cultural landscape of the town thus includes multiple layers of influences from nature and historical human development. This report seeks to briefly unpack these layers in order to understand any relationships that the broader context may have with the Drostdy property.

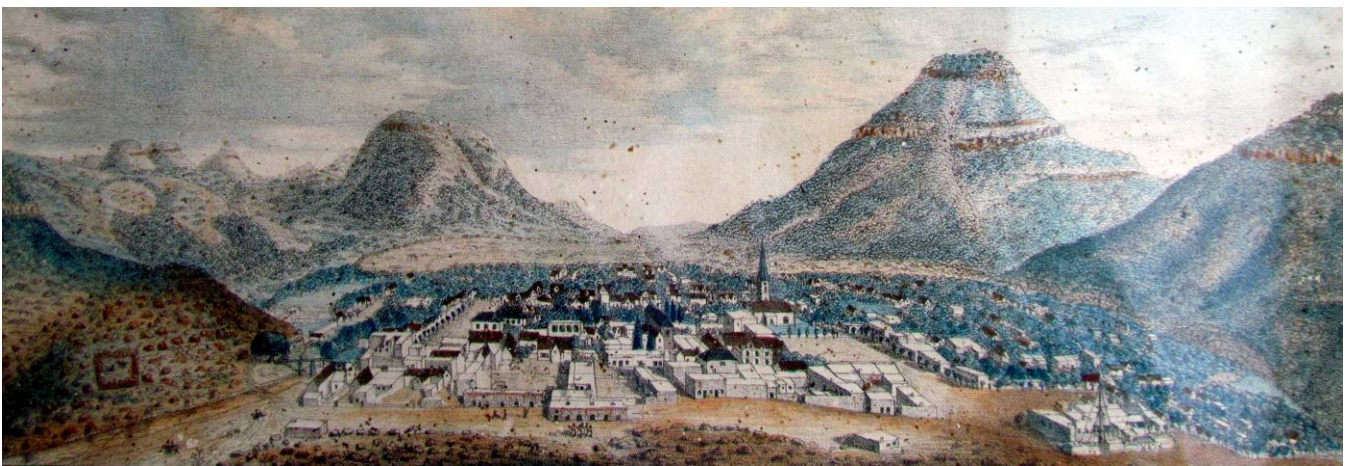


Figure 1. Illustration of historic Graaff-Reinet. (*Graaff-Reinet Museum*)

4.1. Current legislation on cultural landscape protection

An application for the greater Graaff-Reinet landscape as a whole component has been submitted for Grade 1 Conservation Landscape status. Grade 1 status constitutes an area of special natural and cultural significance to all South Africans.

In terms of the National Heritage Resources Act, (NHRA) No. 25 of 1999, 7. (1)a and 3(3), 'Grade 1 status is described as 'Heritage resources with qualities so exceptional that they are of special national significance'. The NHRA further lists the elements of cultural significance or other special values that make up a conservation landscape:

- (a) its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;*
- (b) its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;*
- (c) its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;*
- (d) its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;*
- (e) its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;*
- (f) its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;*
- (g) its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;*
- (h) its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in the history of South Africa; and*
- (i) sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.*

Significance: Graaff-Reinet can claim to exhibit all these values within the broader cultural landscape. The Drostdy and its immediate context contribute to most of these values, making it an invaluable asset to the Graaff-Reinet cultural landscape.

4.2. Natural context

The broader Graaff-Reinet context is 'a boundless and mysterious area covered by vast sheep and game farms, where broad plains roll away to distant koppies and multilayered mountains.' (*graaffreinet.co.za*) Clear and distant horizons, stillness, scents of aged earth and Karoo scrub, are some of the natural characteristics one may experience when visiting the region.



Figure 2. 1945 Aerial photograph of Graaff-Reinet. (*National Geo-Spatial Information*)

4.1.1 Climate & Water

Graaff-Reinet is located near the centre of the 'Great Karoo', termed 'Place of Thirst' due to the arid conditions. The summer rainfall of Graaff-Reinet receives approximately 400mm of rain annually. (Cape Town's annual average rainfall is 630mm)

Using water wisely in this context is therefore imperative to the sustainable survival of the town.

Before the creation of the nearby 'Nqwebe' dam, the town landscape was irrigated by means of spring water discharged into 'leivoor'- channels that lined the streets and gravity fed water to most properties. 'Gardens were flooded by day and night. At the height of the market garden era, the leiwaters were wider and deeper'. (Green, L.G; 1955)

Although modern means of obtaining irrigation water has recently out dated the continued use of the 'leivoor', the memory of them is significant to the functioning and layout of the town. Their relationship with the Drostdy property is significant and elaborated on further in item 6.2.

Aesthetic value:

- Presence of flowing water on a daily basis within an arid environment is welcoming. The leivoor form part of the fabric and layering of the streetscape design, providing unique sense of place

Historic value:

- Reliance of water supply by means of leivoor enabled inhabitants to be self-sufficient on their land
- The leivoor served as another structuring device for most of the town streets

4.1.2 Topography

Graaff-Reinet is tucked into a bend of the Sundays River among the foothills of the Sneeuberg mountain range. 'Spandau Kop' mountain overlooks the town, and forms part of the edge of the Camdeboo National Park. The Camdeboo almost completely surrounds the town, making this a unique natural feature and attraction.

The site for Graaff-Reinet town was chosen primarily for its defensive potential, being surrounded by the river on three sides.



Figure 3. Sketch of historic town centre within context of surrounding topography (Japha D, et al, 1989)



Figure 4. Photograph overlooking Graaff-Reinet (Graaff-Reinet museum)

Aesthetic value:

- Enclosing topography creates a strong sense of place, protecting the town from harsh surrounding natural landscape
- Juxtaposition of mountainous natural setting with flat formal townscape.

Historic value:

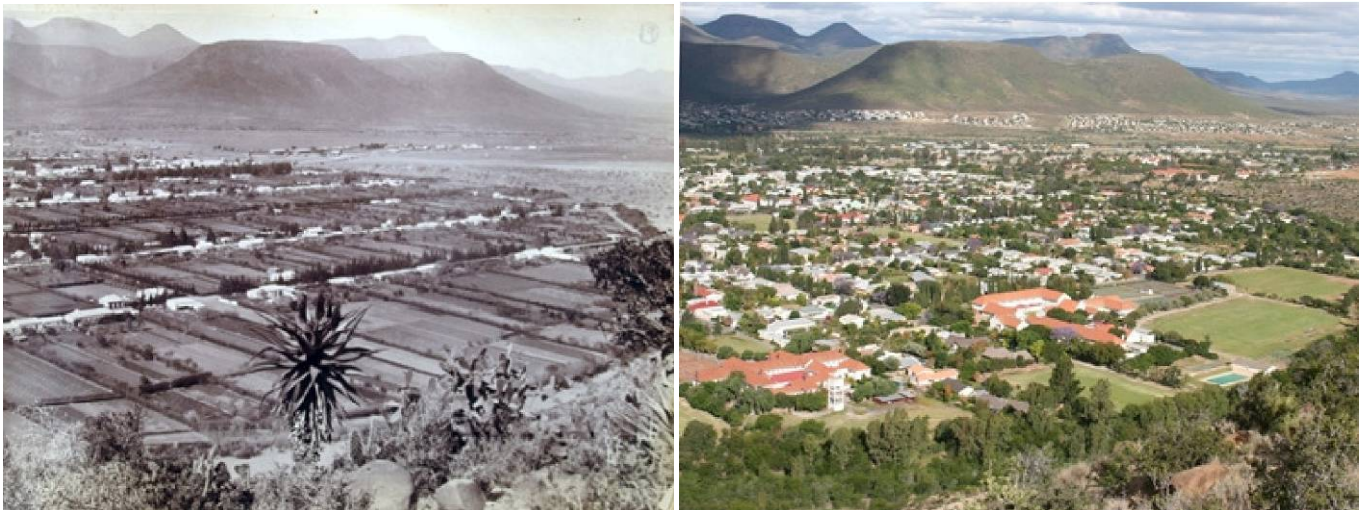
- The natural defence of the river and the creation of the edge to the town.

4.1.3 Vegetation & Gardens

The indigenous vegetation type around the Graaff-Reinet area includes the ‘Dwarf Shrubland’ vegetation types that characterize the semi-arid nature of the Karoo Landscape. Dwarf shrublands are found on low-lying areas, where alkaline alluvial soils are found. It is here too on these rich alluvial soils that the town developed. Plant species within this indigenous type are either grasses or succulents, with little or no trees.

As Graaff-Reinet town developed, indigenous vegetation was rarely incorporated into gardens and streetscape, as occupants preferred to plant familiar exotic species that would provide shade, colour, spatial definition and most commonly, provide harvestable potential. The vegetation of the townscape contrasts strongly with the stark, open and vast surrounding natural landscape.

For these reasons, **Graaff-Reinet is often described as an oasis.**



Figures 5. Historical and modern Graaff-Reinet landscape (Mark Senekal of Propix; May, H, 2013)

Historically, Graaff-Reinet was characterised by strong avenues of trees, which edged the wide streets, and provided a frame together with the building edge, of the internal cultivated lands. The agricultural/ market garden context is elaborated further in item 4.2.6.



Figures 6. Historical and modern Graaff-Reinet landscape (*Mark Senekal of Propix; May, H, 2013*)
 Note the clear contrast of the natural and urban context. The historical tree scape in the historical photos also contrasts with modern development, as historically landscape was more formally defined.

Information from the chapter, '*Midsummer in Graaff-Reinet*' within the novel, '*Karoo*', written by Lawrence G. Green refers to the character of the soft landscape of historical Graaff-Reinet, and can be summarised as follows:

Hedges were grown to provide shade of stoeps and define edges of properties, often combined with werf walls. Species that were often used for hedges were quince, pomegranate, and hibiscus.

Wrought iron arbours were placed adjacent to buildings, along paths or within courtyards. These supported mainly grape vines of varying varieties.

Ornamental planting consisted of fruit trees – orange, pear, lemon, 'lilac' (Jacaranda), which lined flower gardens. '*... the blossoms of the oleander and pomegranate were very beautiful.*'

Shade, Street and Feature trees consisted of cypress, pines, gums, few oaks, syringa's and 'lilac' trees (Jacaranda). 'Trees enhanced the charm of the town.' The use of cypress trees to enhance and frame significant vistas and facades was and is still commonplace in the town. These are very readable as space defining elements in historic photographs of the town.

Indigenous trees recorded were Coral Trees (*Erythrina lysistemon*), Camdeboo stinkwood (*Celtis africana*) and Red Karee (*Searsia lancea*). But indigenous trees were not common within Graaff-Reinet.

Aesthetic value:

- Diverse species providing seasonal interest of colour. Fruiting plants was an important aspect of the soft landscape, to contrast to the 'dull and useless' surrounding indigenous vegetation.

Historic value:

- Ornamental planting complimented buildings through planted arbours or pergolas for shade of stoeps, formal hedges as edges and screening.
- Street trees played an important role in giving definition and hierarchy to streets and framing important building facades.
- Plants with harvestable potential played an important role in the history of Graaff-Reinet.

Social value:

- Use of formal planting helped to define social structure or stature of properties.

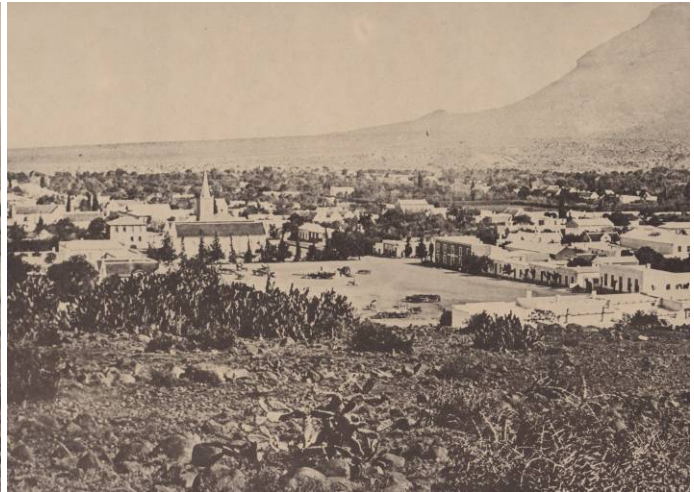


Figure 7. Formal, symmetrical tree planting outside Graaff-Reinet railway station, c. 1900. (Whitlock, E.S)

Figure 8. View over town 1870. (Whitlock, E.S) Note the harsh scrubland within the foreground. (Exotic and invasive cacti also visible here)



Figure 9. Illustrated panorama of Graaff-Reinet from across the Sunday's River. (Author unknown - Graaff-Reinet Museum)

4.2 Historic context

The evolving cultural landscape of Graaff-Reinet can be distinguished into the following periods, which describes in summary the transformation these periods had on the cultural landscape:

4.2.1 Palaeontology

The Graaff-Reinet area has a rich collection of fossils that is regarded as one of the most valuable fossil regions in the world. (*Conservation Landscape, 2009*). The surrounding geology contains different groups of fossils that are unique to anywhere else in the world.

Historic value: Ancient history and evolution of the landscape.

Scientific value: Unique collection of fossils not found anywhere else.

4.2.2 Nomadic pastoralists

Early history includes use of the area by early, middle and later Stone Age people (40 000 years ago). Khoisan hunters and herders left evidence of their occupation in the form of rock paintings and Stone Age industry sites in the eastern section of the Camdeboo Park.

Khoi pastoralists, namely the Inqua tribe, occupied the area until the 1760's, grazing their vast herds of cattle and fat-tailed sheep on the veld around the Sundays River. (*sanparks.org*)

The San hunter-gatherers and the Khoi pastoralists both had an impact on early European settlers and Graaff-Reinet was established principally to quell the attacks of the indigenous Khoisan peoples upon the White settlers. But colonial settlement soon became the detriment of the survival of the Khoisan populations. (*Conservation landscape, 2009*)

Historic value: Before the town's development, the land was used for agriculture, albeit by a different culture and for grazing, not crops.

Social value: Memory of indigenous peoples of the region that once lived off the land.

4.2.3 Dutch & British colonial periods

Graaff-Reinet was established on the eastern boundary of the Dutch East India Company Colony in 1786. The town serviced this remote area of the Karoo which was home to hundreds of farmers. (*May, H; 2013*)

The Drostdy at Graaff-Reinet was established in response to petitions from the Boers of the region, albeit providing little satisfaction to their needs.

Despite the creation of a formal town, the streets and properties took on a semi-rural character, characterized by fruit street trees and crops grown in back gardens. This would have also been in direct response to the droughts at the time, and villagers had to be self sustainable. (*Westby-Nunn, T; 2004*)

In 1795, the new British Cape Colony took occupation of the area, and discourteously described the town 'as occupied by only few families living in mud huts, '...Its appearance is more miserable than that of the poorest village in England.' (*SAhistory.org*)

However, later, James Burchell, who visited Graaff-Reinet in April 1812 wrote "The village, with its adjoining gardens and fields, is nearly surrounded by the Sunday's River ... It consists of one broad principal street, of detached houses, adjoining to each of which a garden well-planted with fruit trees and continually supplied with water."

Towards the end of the 1800's the town was described by traveller Casalis in 1889 who wrote: "By bringing into it the waters of a small river, the people have made of this originally sterile spot a delicious oasis. All the streets are bordered with orange and lemon-trees, with oleanders and syringas ..." (SA History.org)

Graaff-Reinet became the centre of British military operations for the whole Eastern Cape during the Second Boer War (1899–1902). The Boer commando's took advantage of the '...isolated valleys of the Sneeuberg and the adjoining mountain ranges were an ideal retreat where the Boer commandos could recuperate after raids...'. (SAmilitaryhistory.org) '...the war left a long legacy of bitterness in the town and district, especially in the sphere of politics.'

Historic value:

- Influences of Dutch and British occupation within the town.
- The placement of the Drostdy within the town as a significant resource within the region.
- Historic location and setting during the Anglo-Boer War.

Social value:

- Memory of the Dutch and British colonial rule.
- Memory of social strife and fallen war victims during the Anglo-Boer War.

4.2.4 Church heritage

Graaff-Reinet played a role for missionary work of the region. Various mission churches were constructed to support Khoisan parishioners, and later coloured communities. In the 1800's and then later during Apartheid, these 'mission' churches faced discrimination.

Social value:

- Importance of religion in the communities.
- The converting of indigenous peoples to be incorporated into western culture

4.2.5 Slavery & Apartheid

Graaff-Reinet has a history of slavery, and until 1834, there were fewer than 2500 slaves in the area. A number of the emancipated slaves were given land or houses within Graaff-Reinet. The Stretch's Court houses within the Drostdy property are included as some of the houses built for freed slaves.

Before Apartheid, Coloured people lived in the historic 'horseshoe' area of Graaff-Reinet, usually in streets populated by other Coloureds. Some Coloured people lived at the back of plots belonging to white people, where they may have been employed to work in the gardens or in the household.

Historic value:

- Existing built fabric associated with slavery, including slave bells, freed slave houses, and memorials.

Social value:

- Memory of slavery within the area.
- The town is the birthplace of Dr Anton Rupert, notable businessman and conservationist, openly opposed to apartheid during that era; and Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, founder of the PAC

4.2.6 Agriculture & Market Gardens

At the time of the establishment of Graaff-Reinet, 'most residents had orchards and gardens in their plots, as well as some livestock which were grazed on communal pastures outside of town' (*Conservation landscape*) Before the introduction of merino sheep and angora goats by English settlers in the 1840's, **market gardening and viticulture were important aspects of the town's economy, and well as daily sustenance for inhabitants.**

Extracts from the chapter, '*Midsummer in Graaff-Reinet*' within the novel, '*Karoo*', written by Lawrence G. Green, Describes in more detail the 'harvestable' landscape of historical Graaff-Reinet:

Where possible, plant species were selected for their edible value:

The streetscape was described by Botanist Burchell, after his visit at the beginning of 19th century: "*along the principal street a row of orange and lemon trees, at this time loaded with fruit, formed a decoration as novel to an English eye, as it was in itself beautiful by the clean, glossy verdure of the foliage and the bright contrast of the golden fruit*".

Missionary Backhouse visited Graaff-Reinet towards the end of the 1830's, and wrote:

"The streets cross at right angles and are bordered with lemon trees. The intervening squares are filled up with vineyards and gardens, having hedges of lemon, pomegranate and quince, and being watered from a copious spring in the neighbourhood, by means of ditches..."

"The gardens are stocked with orange, pear, apricot, walnut and peach trees..."

"White washed houses have oleanders and melias or other ornamental trees in front..."

"The blossoms of the oleander and pomegranate were very beautiful, and the air was perfumed by the flowers of the vine..."

The 'combination of intense heat, rich soil and irrigation water', provided the opportunities to grow a wide variety of grapes – 'Hanepoot, Barbarossa 'crystal' grapes; Catawba and acorn grapes'. Within the pastorie garden, 40 grape varieties were grown.

Oats and lucerne were grown for livestock fodder. Goats were kept for their milk, and 'walked freely from hillsides to owner' within the town. Fig ('Smyrna fig') trees and water melon were grown for 'konfynt' – a delicacy of the region.

Vineyards and market gardens were irrigated by the leivoor, being flooded by day and night. At the 'height' of market garden era, the leiwaters were supposedly 'wider and deeper'.



Figure 10. 1945 Aerial photograph of the historic core within Graaff-Reinet. (*National Geo-Spatial Information*)
Note the rich tapestry of productive gardens at the centre of the urban blocks

Aesthetic value:

- The abundance of fruit grown within streets and backyards would have been desirable in the otherwise arid and harsh environment.
- Seasonal colour and variety of fruit bearing species and crops would create positive atmosphere and identity to the town and individual properties.

Historic value:

- The town relied on subsistence farming for the daily nourishment and survival of inhabitants.
- Agricultural plots of orchards, vegetable fields and vineyards within the town context were a key characteristic of Graaff-Reinet.

Social value:

- Publicly accessible fruit street trees would have been a novelty, and a means to involve communities in their harvest and upkeep.
- Some properties would have grown different varieties of crops for the purpose of trade, and production of local delicacies such as konfyt, and 'wit-hond'.

4.3 Urban context

Within the older town area encompassed by the large bend in the river, otherwise known as the 'horseshoe', exists 'the most complete and well-preserved area of colonial buildings found in South Africa'. (*Conservation Landscape, 2009*) Nearly 200 buildings here have been declared Provisional Heritage Sites under Section 27 of the National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999.

At the heart of the horseshoe, centred on the intersection of Church and Parsonage Street, is a neighbourhood containing the best well preserved heritage buildings, one of them being the Drostdy and some associated buildings on the property.

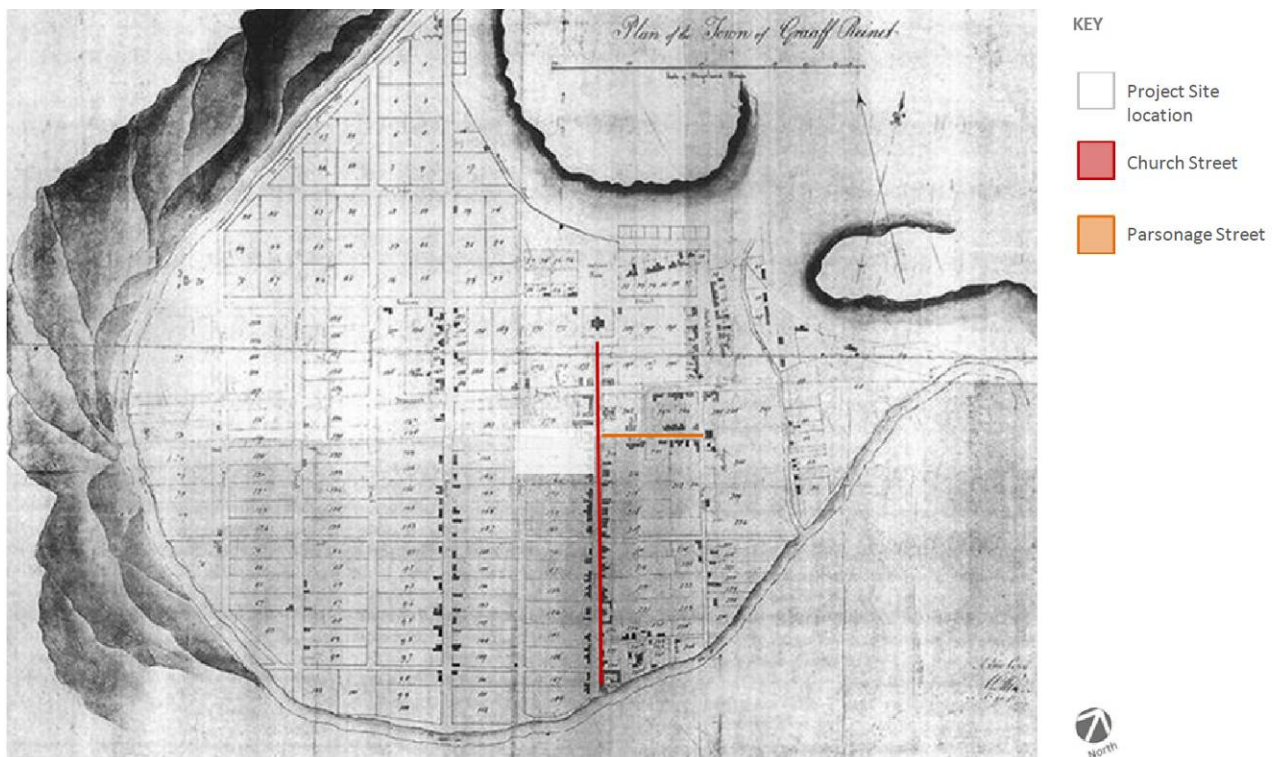


Figure 11. Plan of Graaff Reinet c. 1823 by G. Thompson (*Fransen, 2006. May, H, 2013*)

‘The Dutch designed and laid out Graaff-Reinet in a grid system, but with a slight shift in the course of the parallel streets in order to place a church at the focus of this major street. Parsonage Street, a short street of just one block was also introduced to “enable the fine situation of the Drostdy and the Parsonage at either focus”. (Fransen, H; 2006)

The Drostdy formed one of the most important centres of power within the town, occupying a prominent position on Church Street, directly on axis with the church and parsonage, the latter two buildings also holding significant status.

An expression of European culture and influence was to enhance the grandeur and importance of institutional buildings. This was often mirrored in the landscape, as can be seen in historical photos of the Drostdy – two stately cypress trees planted either side of the front façade.



Figures 11 & 12. Uniform cypress trees enhancing the symmetry of the grand Drostdy facade cir 1880 (Whitlock, E)

A particular feature of the Graaff-Reinet townscape is the relationship between buildings and the streets they define. Historically, most buildings were located close to the site boundaries and were often connected with walls to create a continuous envelope of building, which enclosed the agricultural blocks behind. (Todeschini)

Aesthetic value:

- Visual links, strong symmetries and order of the historic town centre
- Sense of place of unique town layout – formal order of town surrounded by and informed by natural elements.

Historic value:

- The grid layout of the town, bounded organically by the river.
- The placement of significant buildings of status around chief street intersections
- The definition of streets by building edge and contained agricultural blocks behind

Social value:

- Hierarchy in streets provided superior social status
- Memory of distinguishing separate racial neighbourhoods

5 Existing condition of the Drostdy site

The Drostdy property has operated as a hotel on a continuous basis since 1878 and has played a significant historic role in tourism. The Drostdy property occupies a pivotal position within the town from an urban, cultural and historic point of view. The site lies at the centre of both the historic civic and the tourist hearts of the town and is closely tied into all aspects of social memory within Graaff-Reinet. (urban design Statement)

The Drostdy property complex has been subject to various development changes over the last century, which has included the construction of new buildings, external structures, landscape built features (pools, walls, water features etc), and undergone various alterations and renovations to the protected heritage buildings. The soft landscape has also been subject to changes, with the disappearance of orchards/ market gardens, and the ad-hoc planting of trees and shrubs.

Elements of significance of the site have been identified and summarized in the next chapter to provide further informants for redevelopment design proposals.

6 Elements of cultural and aesthetic significance of the Drostdy property

6.1 Natural Systems & Topography

The site sits near the centre of the historic town, and has no direct physical connection or relationship with surrounding natural context, except for visual and sensory – tangible relationships to be acknowledged.

Aesthetic value:

- Sense of place – The site contributes to the urban fabric that enhances the culturally significant juxtaposition of lush, abundant gardens with the dry, untamed scrubland of the natural surrounding environment.

6.2 Water Supply and Drainage

As with the majority of properties within the ‘horseshoe’ neighbourhood, irrigation of cultivated lands behind the buildings was fed by means of the ‘Leivoor’ system. Remnants of leivoors still exist around and within the Drostdy property: Along Parlement and Bourke Street; and along Stretch’s Court. Although fragmented and no longer in use, these ‘leivoors’ must be acknowledged as a significant element of the cultural landscape.

Opportunities to upgrade, reinstate, or celebrate their memory must be explored through appropriate design interventions.

Aesthetic value:

- Presence of water, especially moving water, instils a sense of health and nourishment and a cooling effect in summer.

Historic value:

- Daily life style of irrigation water flowing into the property via the leivoor enabled greening and successful crop production
- The Leivoor running along Stretch’s Court exists and is an important historic element here

- The Leivoor running along the property edge of Parlement and Bourke are significance historical structuring street and edge elements

6.3 Landscape and Settlement Patterns

The Drostdy property developed in the same manner as all the other properties within the historic town - buildings being built right on the street edge to enable open lands behind to be cultivated. As economies and needs changed, the open cultivated lands behind disappeared as buildings expanded and new buildings emerged.

Stretch's Court lane used to connect through to Church Street from Bourke Street. Construction of buildings along either edge of this lane would have been consistent with the settlement growth pattern.

Historic value:

- Built form dominating the edge of the property is part of the historical settlement pattern for the town. Hard edges along street front, with soft, open cultivated space behind are a historic pattern also associated with the Drostdy property
- An undeveloped portion of the Drostdy property still exists where once orchards occupied the land

Social value:

- Economic changes and needs of modern development need to be acknowledged and accommodated appropriately without impacting on elements of cultural significance
- Memory of agricultural use of the land for self sufficiency

6.4 Spatial organisation and visual relationships

The Drostdy building was strategically placed on the corner of Church and Parlement Streets. The placement puts the Drostdy on the east west axis in direct relation to the significant Parsonage building on the other end of Parsonage Street. This axis intersects the north south axis, terminating with the historic Church to the north.

The internal spatial organization of the property would have followed the principal of the settlement patterns with buildings built on the edge, and internal spaces left open for gardens. Clear, defined edges and boundaries would have articulated distinct external court and garden spaces.

Hierarchy of spaces would have been structured by axes, circulation patterns, building use and building proximity.

Aesthetic value:

- Sense of hierarchy reinforced by strong axes and symmetries
- Formal courtyard garden located immediately at the back of the Drostdy providing a place of respite
- Stretch's Court streetscape
- The Drostdy, Camdeboo Restaurant and Thibault Room buildings aligning and forming an edge to Church Street
- The side facade of the Drostdy, Kromm's Inn and No. 5 Parlement Street building edge
- The Bourke Street building edge

Historic value:

- The significant visual relationship between the Drostdy and the Parsonage
- Strong symmetries and hierarchy of external spaces

- Streetscape defined by building edges , boundary walls, leivoor and street trees

Social value:

- Drostdy property playing a pivotal role as a civic and tourist attraction

6.5 Buildings and structures

Descriptions of the buildings that occupy the Drostdy Hotel Property have been thoroughly covered within the Heritage Statement report compiled by Urban Concepts.

For the purposes of this Cultural Landscape Assessment, buildings have been categorised according to value of cultural landscape significance: For individual significances the Heritage Statement must be referred to.



Figure 13. Historical Buildings of the Drostdy property (Ref: Fig 11 Site Morphology, May, H; 2013)

High significance:

The Drostdy, most of the Stretch’s Court slave cottages and Kromm’s Inn. All of these date between 1805 and the late 1860, and are listed Provisional Heritage Sites.

Medium significance:

Ferreira House, No. 5 Parleмент Street, front portion of the Camdeboo restaurant and front portion of Thibault Room. These date between 1860 and the early 1900’s. Newer Stretch’s Court cottages built from the 1960’s onwards are regarded as being significant due to their appropriate style and contributing relationship to the Stretch’s Court lane.

Low significance:

Back of house facilities, Camdeboo restaurant kitchen buildings, garages and carports. Much of the 20th century landscape features, including fishponds, planters and fountains have low or no significance.

Aesthetic value:

- The fine vernacular architecture of the *High* and *Medium* significant buildings generating streetscapes and internal open spaces

Historic value:

- Declared Provincial Heritage Sites (PHS) of the various key buildings
- The relationship of the PHS buildings with one another, especially along street edge/ Stretch's Court lane edge

Social value:

- Use of the buildings for hotel and recreational facilities
- Buildings as a valuable asset for the local community and tourism
- Memory of the use of 'Stretch's Court' cottages by freed slaves

6.6 Edge conditions and boundaries

Mixed edge conditions exist around and inside the property. External property edges differ and are in character to the direct relation of the hierarchy of the spaces that they bound:

Along Church Street, front building facades and interlinking high walls with a formal gate, characterise this formal and significant edge – the 'front face' to the property. Only one tree, namely a yellowwood tree exists along the street edge, where historically the façade of the Drostdy was framed by tall cypress trees.

Parlement Street edge is less formal, with mixed side and front building façades, interlinked by long high stone walls punctured by gated vehicular entrances and garage. A number of cypress trees of varying age exist within the pavement. Portions of the historic high stone wall with old carriage entrance, dates to the 1870's and links the Drostdy building and the 'Cobblers Shop'.

Bourke Street has an informal mixed character of low werf walls, open pedestrian and vehicular entrances, and building edges of two Stretch's Court cottages. A number of mixed street trees exist within the pavement, but vegetation is also visible within gardens beyond the werf walls.

The southern property boundary is rural in character, characterised by wire fencing and planted rows of trees and cacti.

Staggered internal property boundaries are characterised by back of building or high walls.

Internal spaces of the property are largely fragmented by elements built during the 1960's and 1970's. These include high garden walls, carports, built planters ad hoc planting of trees.

A length of an older historic wall, dated to 1859, exists along part of the original property boundary line containing Stretch's Court.

Aesthetic value:

- Character of historic building facades and painted stone walls
- Sense of hierarchy that the different street edges provide – creates sense of place
- Soft edge condition on the southern 'rural' boundary

Historic value:

- The relationship of historic building facades with corresponding streets
- Memory of openings into the property from the street
- The value of street trees in contributing to character of edges and enhancing historical facades.
- Contribution the leivoor provided to boundary edges.

6.7 Gardens & Open Space Systems

Historically, the open space system of the Drostdy property would have been a simple combination of a formal courtyard located at the rear of the Drostdy, that would have lead onto cultivated lands at the back of the property. From approximately 1847 onwards, the development of new buildings on the property commenced, and the un-fragmented cultivated lands would start to disappear, to make way for more formalised gardens relating to individual buildings. However, in an aerial photograph, dated 1945, open space remaining around buildings still seems to be cultivated to an extent with few intrusive dividing garden walls and other structures.

Open space and gardens can be categorised according to their significance:

High significance:

The courtyard and garden at the back of the Drostdy building is integral to the historic building component, and the most significant 'garden space', and still in use. However, the current planting palette (plant species choice) of the garden is of low significance, except for the vines growing on the pergola. The paving materials and 'Japanese stream' is also considered of low significance.

The remaining open space along the south of the property is considered highly significant due it remaining undeveloped, and its historic use as an orchard – an important cultural landscape element of Graaff-Reinet.

The Stretch's Court lane is given high significance as an open space due to its historic use and relationship to abutting preserved cottages.

Medium significance:

The camdeboo courtyard, entrance courtyard, kromm's courtyard and ferriera courtyard are considered medium significance. They are well-defined spaces in relation to historic fabric, contained by more modern structuring elements, such as werf or garden walls.

Low significance:

The remaining spaces between old and new built fabric are considered of low significance, as they are poorly defined, with little or no heritage value. These spaces are also cluttered with 20th century elements, including built planters, wine barrel pot plants, ad hoc planting and inconsistent surface materials.

Aesthetic value:

- Greening of spaces for shade, seasonal interest, attraction
- Providing a contrasting lush environment to the 'untamed' wilds of the surrounding natural landscape

Historic value:

- Importance of open spaces in the urban context, as places for crop production, privacy, respite
- The use of open space to enhance geometries of built fabric
- Open space network that assists legibility of the landscape

Social value:

- The memory of open space and gardens used for crop production, an essential element of the economy of historic Graaff-Reinet.

6.8 Historical planting patterns and vegetation

The property has remnants of historic planting patterns, but very few historic vegetation remains. With numerous changes in ownership, the property has been subjected to subdivisions, new building developments and multiple changes in use. The soft landscape is thus fragmented and much of the existing vegetation dates back to the end of the 20th century, with little historic significance. However, historic maps, photos and narratives have been used to inform rates of significance. The vegetation and agricultural context described in sections 4.1.3 and 4.2.6 must be referred to in understanding what the cultural landscape of the Drostdy property may have looked like.

High significance:

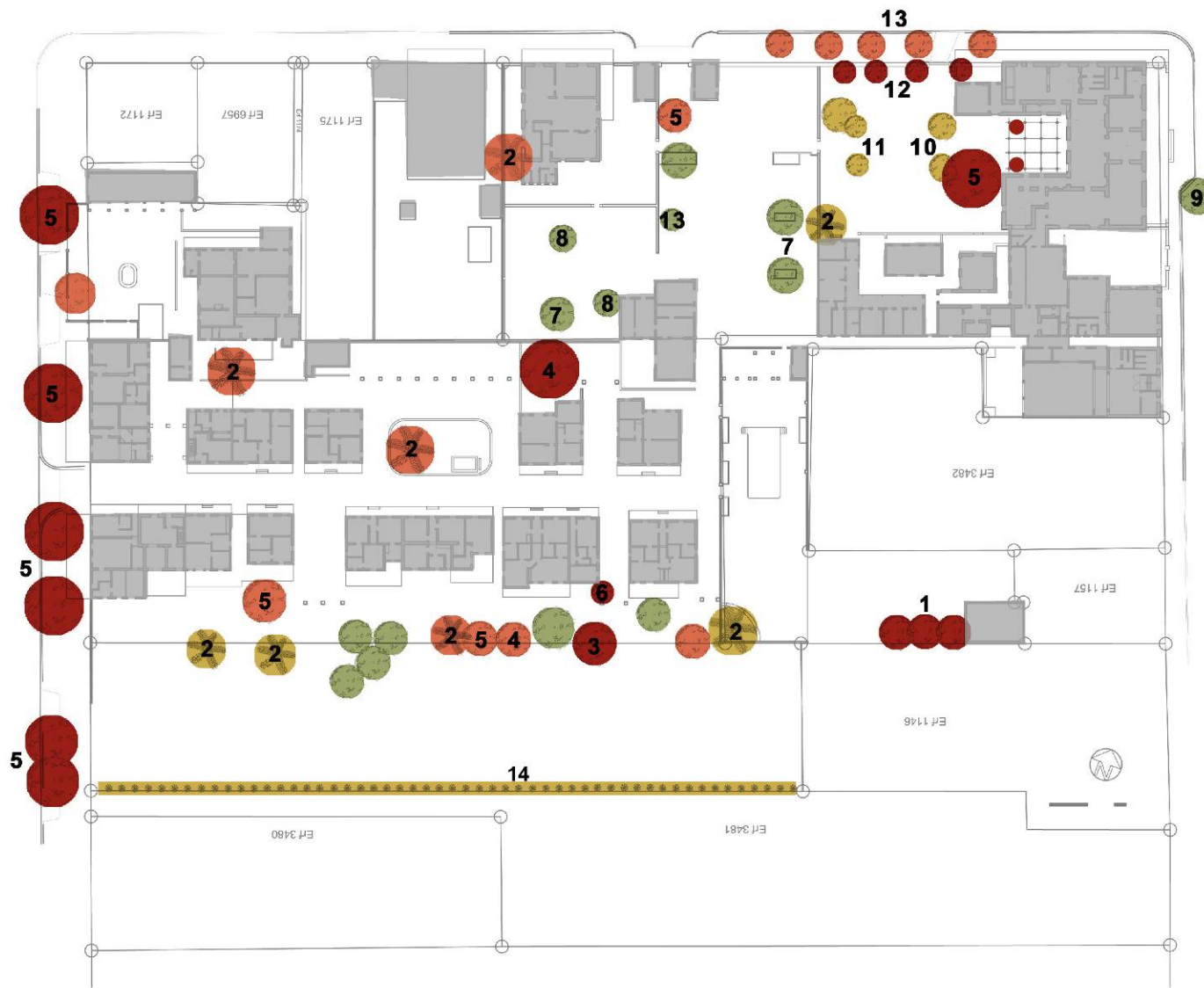
- The historic use of planting for functional purposes – harvesting of fruit/ vegetables, providing screen/ barrier, enhancing axis, symmetries, framing views and providing shade.
- The existing vines on the pergola within the Drostdy courtyard. Vines and creepers were very commonly used historically in Graaff-Reinet, providing seasonal interest, shade and crops.
- The use of stately looking trees (Cypress) to enhance and balance the front façade of the Drostdy building. The existing single yellowwood tree in this location is not regarded as highly significant due to its irregular shape and solitary insignificance.
- The memory that Stretch’s court was “*Once shaded by great pear trees*” (*Graaff Reinet Publicity Association – May, H; 2013*) “The lane was once much narrower, giving the sense “*A Passas*” – (a passage), as the front stoeps were heavily planted, most probably with vegetables or flowering plants.
- The historic use of fruit trees and produce gardens. Fruit trees were used to line garden paths and were planted as an orchard in the open space south of the site.

Medium significance:

- The existing row of mature trees south of Stretch’s court is significant for its use as a green consistent element providing definition of space and greening of the site. However, the mixed, seemingly ad hoc choice of tree species in this row is not regarded as significant. Historically, rows of trees in this context would have been of the same species to provide consistency and spatial definition. Selection of trees to be planted adjacent to orchards or cultivated lands would have also been species that would cast less shade, unlike the species existing on site today.
- The number of mature feature tree specimens, namely Palm trees (*Phoenix canarienses*), and the single very large indigenous White Stinkwood (*Celtis africanus*)

Low significance:

- Use of lawns. The nature of lawns as not water wise, and not in keeping with the semi-rural historic character of the site.
- The cactus row on the southern boundary of the property.
- The extensive use of wine barrel pots plants and other container planting.



Legend

- Trees with High Significance
Must be retained
- Trees with Medium Significance
Can be retained or transplanted
- Trees with Medium Significance
Can be removed or transplanted
- Trees with Low Significance
Should be removed

1. *Ficus nitida*
2. *Phoenix canariensis* - Palm
3. *Celtis africana*
4. *Schinus molle*
5. *Jacaranda mimosifolia*
6. *Citrus* sp.
7. *Casaurina* sp.
8. *Psidium guajava* - Guava
9. *Podocarpus* sp.
10. *Citrus x limon* - Lemon
11. *Morus nigra* - Mulberry
12. *Cyprusus sempervirens*
13. *Cyprusus* sp.
14. Cactus row

Figure 14. Trees of Significance



Figure 15. The single, irregular shaped Yellowwood tree outside front facade of the Drostdy (Van Papendorp, 2013)

Figure 16. Mixed cypress trees along Parlement Street edge (Van Papendorp, 2013)



Figure 17. West facing view down Stretch's Court, (Van Papendorp, 2013)

Figure 18. East facing view down Stretch's Court, with bougainvillea in their prime, but blocking significant facades (graaffreinet.co.za)



Figure 19. Mature palm trees with medium significance – can be retained or transplanted (Van Papendorp, 2013)

Figure 20. portion of the abandoned produce garden area, lined by ad hoc mixed tree species (Van Papendorp, 2013)



Figure 21. Important tree lined Bourke Street with Leivoor (*Van Papendorp, 2013*)



Figure 22. Clutter of pot plants along Bourke Street edge (*Van Papendorp, 2013*)



Figure 23. Vines with high significance on Drostdy pergola (*Van Papendorp, 2013*)



Figure 24. Mixed planting within the Drostdy garden. Cypress and lemon species of significance (*Van Papendorp, 2013*)



Figure 25. Old *Celtis africana* specimen, with high significance (Van Papendorp, 2013)

Figure26. Lemon tree with high significance (Van Papendorp, 2013)

Figure27. Slave bell with high social and historical significance. Palm tree in background with medium significance (Van Papendorp, 2013)

6.9 Site furniture and special objects

The property has little landscape site furniture or special objects of significance. What does exist can be categorised as follows:

High significance:

The slave bell dated 1830. It is also highly significant that this bell be located near the Stretch's court cottages.

Low significance:

Wine barrels have been used along the front stoeps of the Stretch's Court cottages as pots for planting. These were introduced in the 1960's and 1970's and contribute to the clutter of external spaces.

Various water features exist around the site, which would were also introduced in the 1960's and 1970's. Although using water as a feature in the Graaff-Reinet landscape is considered highly significant, the method and design style must be appropriate to the memory of water use, while at the same time complementing the architectural language.

Historic value:

- Historic importance of the 1830 Slave Bell, and it's location nearest the Stretch's Court cottages

7 Design indicators and Recommendations

General

- Acknowledge the multiple layers of development through history within and around the property. This can be represented through story boards, albums or narratives that document changes of ownership, landscape, buildings and site use.
- New developments within the Drostdy property must not reduce the significance that the site plays in terms of its valuable contribution to the broader Graaff-Reinet cultural landscape status.

Water

- Retain and enhance the memory of distributing water into the site via 'leivoor'. Existing leivoor could either be restored, or upgraded to suit modern uses of the site, i.e. channels could be made shallower and narrower, but their original location should be expressed.
- Water as a valuable resource and visual feature within this cultural landscape could be expressed through appropriately designed water features such as rills, and bubbling ponds that would enhance external spaces and compliment the built fabric, symmetries etc.

Open space

- Open spaces within the property should be greened as far as possible. Green spaces play a role in coping with the harsh environmental elements experienced in the surrounding natural context. Green urban spaces must also contrast visually with the surrounding stark, arid, and low-growing vegetation.
- Hardscape must be seen to 'carve' itself out of the green landscape, and not the other way round.
- Use of open space must be clearly defined, with spatial articulation improved.
- Hierarchy of spaces would be determined by axes, circulation, association with building use and building proximity.
- Open space must be consistent with the semi-rural qualities of the cultural landscape. Choice of harvestable plants, gravel/ laterite surfaces, no kerb lines, low-key lighting must all be considered.

Vegetation

- Reinstate elements of food production/ orchard within the open space south of Stretch's court. Choice of fruit tree species selection, trees spacing and alignment must be considered.
- Use planting as a structuring element to create spatial definition, balance and symmetry – enhancing and complementing built form, axes, entrances, pathways, vistas and focal points.
- Remove ad hoc planting that does not contribute to the significance of the cultural landscape.
- Retain and enhance vines on pergolas and arbours.
- Retain the mature and very large White Stinkwood (*Celtis africana*) specimen.
- Retain or transplant the stately mature Palm trees within appropriate positions.
- Replace the single Yellowwood tree within Church Street with two large cypress specimens that will compliment the balance and grand façade of the Drostdy.
- Plant fruit trees along garden edges and along footpaths where possible, to enhance the historic 'harvestable' cultural landscape of Graaff-Reinet.
- Consider reinstating a single row of pear trees along Stretch's court to provide greening and shade of this lane.
- Remove wine barrel pot plants from Stretch's court, and instead plant appropriate shrubs/ ground covers within the ground that will integrate, simplify and de-clutter the space.

- Species selection for hedges should be of plants species commonly used in the cultural landscape of the town. E.g. Pomegranate, hibiscus, quince.
- Species selection for shrubs and ground covers should provide seasonal interest and colour, in keeping with colonial plant selection.

Edges and Boundaries

- Replace high walls with low werf walls where possible, to be in keeping with the Cape Dutch country farm character.
- Conserve the remaining historic walls. Retain the memory of the old property cadastral lines through retention of walls.
- New visually permeable gates and fences to be contemporary, without copying the existing.
- Enhance green edges with visually strong and consistent tree planting, especially along Parlement Street and Bourke Street.



Figure 28. Cultural Landscape Framework Plan

8. Conclusion

The important cultural and heritage significance of the Drostdy Property and its role within the town, reinforces the need to respect the cultural landscape of the site and surrounds. Interpretations of the informants derived through the assessment of the cultural landscape must be considered for all new interventions within and beyond the property.

The design indicators derived from this report, should also be considered for the reassessment of the street environments. i.e. The Parsonage Street tree planting, to reinforce the actual relationship between the Drostdy and the Parsonage. Similarly, Church Street streetscape improvements. This would imply collaboration with local council and stakeholders.

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